



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH  
WASHINGTON

JUL 1 1981

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Director  
Intelligence Community Staff

SUBJECT:

DCI's Production Enhancement Awards, FY 83-84

REFERENCE:

Your Memorandum of 26 March 1981

I am pleased to submit the attached proposal as INR's response to the DCI's request for innovative ways to improve the quality of intelligence analysis. The proposal is directed at one of the more persistent and pervasive difficulties encountered in political analysis: giving due weight to how traditional belief systems and other cultural elements interact with non-traditional ones to help shape the domestic political behavior and external policies of particular foreign governments and peoples.

We estimate that, if selected for implementation, the proposed project would require awards of \$750,000 in FY 83 and a like amount in FY 84.

As requested by your staff, we are sending copies of this submission directly to those members of the selection panel listed below.

*Ronald I. Spiers*  
Ronald I. Spiers

Attachment:  
As stated

cc: CIA  
DIA  
IC Staff  
INR  
NSA

- [Redacted]  
- [Redacted]  
- Jon Wiant  
- [Redacted]

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THE CULTURAL ELEMENT  
IN  
POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Terms of Reference for a Contract Research Project

PURPOSES AND OVERVIEW

The primary purpose of this project is to enhance the quality of political analysis by probing the impact that culture has on politics and providing materials that will enable intelligence analysts (and those in related USG professions) more readily and reliably to prepare (and appreciate) culturally sensitive political analysis. To that end, the project envisions five types of products:

1. A sophisticated checklist of politically salient aspects of culture, with explanatory, illustrative, and comparative commentary. The checklist should serve as a guide for experienced USG professionals required to observe, explain, or operate in or toward any foreign political system.
2. A series of concise and rigorous statements each dealing with culture and politics in one of twenty-five selected countries (see Annex A). Each statement should result from careful application of the checklist and be designed as an aid to country experts, primarily intelligence analysts but also other USG employees assigned to reporting, analytical, representational, negotiating, policy development or other political functions with respect to the country.
3. A report, with recommendations, on techniques for conveying to experienced USG foreign affairs professionals the type of advanced cultural understanding embodied in the checklist

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and country statements. The techniques should be those judged most effective for use in short courses at the Foreign Service Institute and other USG educational institutions in which analysts and related professionals receive advanced training.

4. A report on the feasibility of producing, at little or no cost to the USG, a volume of readings in culture and politics for each or some of the selected twenty-five countries. Each volume should be designed to add illustrative depth to the major points made in the country statement, which should be the focal piece of the volume.
5. A series of well-prepared direct encounters between USG analysts and other professionals, on the one hand, and outside scholars and experts on the other. The meetings should be geared to the preparation, review, and refinement of the materials specified above. They should provide opportunities for the participants to probe and possibly reduce the limits to their understanding of culture and politics. To the extent this takes place, there can be improvements in the art of political analysis long before final materials are prepared, and the quality of the materials will be enhanced.

The secondary purpose of this project is to stimulate in the academic sector additional multi-disciplinary, and preferably self-sustaining, effort to advance knowledge of culture and politics in its theoretical, methodological, and practical dimensions. If, as work on the project proceeds, it is determined that this can best be accomplished through the development of a national center of excellence for advanced research, writing and teaching in this field, the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research will be prepared to entertain follow-up proposals for an appropriate USG role in that development.

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To explore and advance this purpose, the contractor will provide for a National Council on Foreign Cultures and Politics of distinguished scholars to advise the contractor on the project and to assess the need for a sustained effort beyond the life of the project.

BACKGROUND

In the USG, analysis of the political life of foreign countries is an art which seeks to explain and anticipate events and developments of importance to US policy-makers. Over the past several years there has been a growing belief among the practitioners of the art, and among their clients, that, while perfection of a fully reliable art is un-likely, improvements in the state of the art are possible and important to achieve.

Full mastery of even the current state of the art of foreign political analysis is difficult. It requires, among other things, language fluency (at least bi-lingual) and a profound sense of place and history. What for short-hand purposes can be called the cultural aspects of history are often those most inaccessible to the non-native, the most difficult to master. Yet most country experts agree that these aspects play an important role in shaping contemporary political life and that a well-informed understanding of this role is essential to high quality political analysis.

That is the premise on which this project is based. The materials on culture and politics produced by the project are envisioned (a) as aids through which experienced professionals called upon to apply their analytical skills to a particular country can more reliably and rapidly develop the advanced cultural understanding required, and (b) as valued reference aids for even the most fully experienced country experts. Materials of that nature will have the added utility of making intelligence and policy officers who are not country experts sensitive to this

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dimension of sophisticated political analysis and related policy thought and action.

DESCRIPTION

Culture is a broad concept. Precisely which aspects of culture are politically salient is a matter to be determined on a case by case basis. The key to each such determination, however, is that it include those aspects of culture which are manifest or latent in the contemporary political life of a country, whether in its institutions or in the thought patterns, perceptions and behavior of its leaders, populace, or sub-groups of either. Allowances will have to be made for single and multi-cultural societies, for those with unbroken if evolving traditions and those with multiple layers of different traditions variously synthesized.

It is likely that a broadly useful checklist of politically salient cultural features will have to consider, if not include, such matters as the following: The meanings embedded in religious, folk, or philosophical (belief) <sup>values?</sup> systems for such fundamental concepts as man, nature, society, the supernatural, time, history, universality, truth, causation, and rationality; the perceptions of self, other, we-they, friend, alien, enemy; the meaning of more explicitly political (in the West) concepts, such as authority and state, power and its transfer, government and leadership, law and legitimacy, conflict and consensus, rights and duties, policy and comity, negotiation and bargaining, frontiers and foreigners, nation and world, property and public/private, and politics itself.

Anthropologists; historians of religion, ideas, literature and the arts, as well as of politics; ancient and modern observers and travelers; cross-cultural humanists and social and behavioral scientists; practical men

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from such diverse fields as diplomacy, business and science have encountered and reflected upon politics and culture in various parts of the world. This has resulted in a sizable and diverse literature, full of insights and aphorisms and images, some contradictory, some no longer meaningful to the modern American mind, many distorted by the parochialism of the observer, some overtaken by waves of cultural diffusion, some deeply embedded in elaborate stereotypes or simple prejudices. For some countries, some of the literature has been synthesized under such rubrics as national character, political thought, modernization, and "why they behave like Patagonians." For most countries, what is lacking is a concise, coherent, systematic synthesis which lays bare the historical and culture reasons why political structures, processes, beliefs, perceptions and behavior in country X are what they are, and distinguishes those likely to change only slowly if at all from those subject to radical transformation in an age of rapidly but unevenly growing intercourse among peoples and nations.

too simple a model

If fully adequate statements of this type exist for any of the subject countries, this project should identify them, but in all cases the central objective is to provide such a synthesis. In no case is it anticipated that field work will be undertaken to produce additional raw material for synthesis.

To assure that the statement on each country is rigorous, as complete as possible, and sharply focussed on what is relevant it should be prepared by an acknowledged expert in the field guided by the annotated checklist prepared by this project. In addition it should be thoroughly reviewed by other experts using techniques like those specified below. These reviews are important for another reason: To provide opportunities for those direct encounters between USG analysts and outside scholars the importance of which is discussed in paragraph 5

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under Purposes above. In addition, whenever feasible, the contractor should encourage other reviews in usual academic settings, such as panels of appropriate professional or learned associations.

#### MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of the State Department's Office of Long-Range Assessments and Research, or his designee, will be the Contract Officer's Technical Representative (COTR). The COTR will be the official point of contact for the principal investigator and others of the contractor's technical personnel. The COTR will assemble a small working group of officers from the Department and other interested agencies to advise and assist him in discharge of his responsibilities for this project.

#### RESEARCH TASKS AND PHASES

All products should be delivered in final form three years after signing of the contract, or earlier as scheduled in this section. Because of the complexity and breadth of the project, it should have two distinct phases with the Department of State having the choice of cancel~~ing~~, amending, or proceeding on schedule with the second phase after evaluation of the results of Phase I. Proposers are invited to propose modifications in the phases and related research tasks outlined here when such modifications promise <sup>in</sup> improvements/efficiency and/or quality of products.

#### Phase I

The first phase should be completed 18 months after the signing of the contract. This includes State Department evaluation of Phase I.

*list of  
"Observables"*

Task I.1. The contractor is to prepare a structured checklist of politically salient cultural elements with explanatory, illustrative and comparative commentary. The checklist is to be suitable for use by all authors of country studies as initial guidance for their research and writing. In addition, it should provide guidance for experienced

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foreign affairs professionals preparing to undertake analytical or other political work on or in a new country of assignment. Performance Period: Months 1 & 2.

Task I.2. The contractor, in consultation with the COTR, is to: refine (a) the criteria for the composition and selection of members, and (b) a statement of responsibilities for, a National Council on Foreign Cultures and Politics; recruit the members of the Council; and schedule its first meeting. (Proposals should contain the proposer's concept of the composition and responsibilities of the Council.)

Task I.3. The contractor is to convene, in consultation with the Council and the COTR, a multi-disciplinary, multi-regional panel of scholars and USG officers to review and critique the product of Task I.1; revise the product as necessary; reconvene the panel (perhaps reconstituted after consultation with the COTR); make final revisions and deliver 300 copies of a "First Edition" checklist to the State Department. Performance Period: Months 3 & 4.

Task I.4. The contractor is to submit to the COTR a carefully reconsidered and justified list of the ten country case studies to be completed by the end of Phase I. (Proposers are requested to include such a list and the rationale for the countries selected in initial proposals). Each item on the reconsidered list is to be accompanied by the names of three scholars or experts each of whom the contractor and the Council believe to be fully qualified to undertake the study and for each of whom the contractor has reason to believe that person would be available to prepare the study. Performance Period: Months 2 & 3.

Task I.5. The contractor is to consider State Department comments on any or all aspects of the product of Task I.4 and to consult with the COTR to arrive at a definitive selection of countries and scholars. Performance Period: Department comments, month 4; contractor sub-contracting with ten selected scholars or experts, months 5 through 9.



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Task I.6. The contractor will identify and collect appropriate literature on each of the 25 countries, giving emphasis however to the ten countries included in Phase I. To the extent possible, the State Department will make available unclassified USG studies and documents to be added to the collection. The contractor will make each country collection available to the pertinent author who in turn will be expected to add to and refine the collection in doing his research and writing. An annotated list, up-dated monthly, of materials collected on each country is to be maintained by the contractor to be delivered to the Department at its request. Performance period: Months 1-18.

Task I.7. No more than four months after signing a sub-contract with an author for an individual country statement, the contractor will provide to the Department a well-written and well-edited draft of that statement. The contractor will also schedule, in consultation with the COTR, meetings of two types of panels to review and critique each statement: (a) A multi-disciplinary, multi-regional panel of scholars and present and former USG officers sensitive to cultural factors in political thought and action. (This may be either the same or a similar panel to that engaged in Task I.3, and it may be asked to review two or more statements at a single meeting.); (b) A multi-disciplinary panel of scholars and USG officers who are recognized experts on the country in question. Reflecting upon the results of these reviews, the contractor will undertake whatever additional steps are required to produce what the contractor--assisted by the re-convened panel of country experts--judges to be a rounded and rigorous statement for each particular country. One thousand copies of each "First edition" statement are to be delivered to the Department--each professionally edited, to contain between 12,000 and 15,000 words, and in a format to be agreed but to include a 2-3 page "highlights" section, appropriate introductory material, and a selected

*why 2-3  
words*

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and annotated bibliography. Performance period: Months 8-15.

Task I.8. There is evidence that experienced foreign affairs professionals, those who have already demonstrated a considerable ability to communicate in and adjust to unfamiliar cultural environments, are slow to acknowledge the need for the more advanced cultural knowledge it is the purpose of this project to produce, especially when traditional teaching methods are used to make that knowledge available. This research task should produce a report in the form of a catalogue or handbook of teaching methods, materials, and techniques successfully used for this purpose, each item described and evaluated as to its strengths and weaknesses. It is especially important to distinguish from one another items which are successful for preparing a person with respect to a single culture from those which are successful for simultaneously preparing a number of persons each going to or involved analytically with a different country; items of the latter type should be stressed. Items should also be evaluated on the feasibility of incorporating them in relatively brief courses for experienced professionals. Unconventional and innovative items, tested or deemed worthy of testing, should be sought out. Proposers should specify in some detail how they would approach and pursue this task. Ten copies of a draft report should be delivered to the COTR and 100 copies of a final report 30 days after he conveys to the contractor the Department's comments on the draft. Performance period: Months 1-8 for preparation of the draft report.

Task I.9. To assist in evaluating the results of Phase I, the contractor will undertake a review of the checklist (product of Task I.3) in light of: the experience of using it as guidance for the ten country statements of Phase I, any feedback from USG professionals, and any academic reviews whether or not encouraged by the contractor.

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The contractor will deliver to the COTR ten copies of either a draft "Second Edition" of the checklist or a report explaining why such an edition is not necessary. Performance Period: Months 16 & 17.

Task I.10. Also to assist in evaluating the results of Phase I, the contractor will undertake a review of the report on teaching techniques (product of Task I.8) in light of any feedback from the Foreign Service Institute and other institutions of advanced training--USG or otherwise--which have employed or reviewed the report. The contractor will deliver to the COTR ten copies of a draft revised report or a different report explaining why revisions are not necessary. Performance Period: Months 16 & 17.

Task I.11. While the Department is evaluating the results of Phase I, the contractor will, in consultation with the authors of the ten completed country statements, consider the feasibility of producing for each country a companion Book of Readings with brief connecting materials, the entire volume designed to add illustrative depth to the major points made in the country statement, which should itself be the focal piece of the volume. If the contractor concludes that a volume for each of one or more of the ten countries is feasible, he will submit to the Department a formal proposal for production and publication at no or least cost to the US Government. Alternatively, the contractor should submit a report explaining why such volumes are not feasible. Performance period: Months 15-18.

#### Phase II

The second phase, if undertaken, should be completed 36 months after signing of the contract. The objectives of Phase II are:

- To publish, if needed, the "Second Edition" of the checklist, with the contractor delivering to the COTR 1000 copies (see Task I.9).

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- To prepare for each of the remaining 15 countries the kind of statement produced in Phase I for the original 10 countries, using as guidance the "Second Edition" of the checklist if there is one.
- To publish, if needed, the revised report on teaching techniques, with the contractor delivering to the COTR 100 copies (see Task I.10).
- To prepare a report, endorsed by the Council, on steps needed, if any, to stimulate and sustain additional efforts in the academic sector to advance knowledge of culture and politics in its theoretical, methodological, and practical dimensions. The report should include recommendations concerning arrangements whereby USG foreign affairs professionals can continue to benefit from this effort.

Proposers should assume that the applicable aspects of Phase I tasks will be repeated in Phase II, although the contract may be amended to reflect the evaluation made at the end of Phase I. Before or during Phase II, the contract may also be amended, if necessary, to incorporate the Department's acceptance in whole or in part of the contractor's proposal for Books of Readings (see Task I.11 above).

#### DELIVERABLES AND DATES

As specified in RESEARCH TASKS AND PHASES section above.

#### LEVEL OF EFFORT

The Department estimates this entire project would require 12-15 professional person years. Proposers' budget submissions should allocate costs for professional time and other expenses to Phases I and II to show the cost for each phase separately.

#### PUBLICATION RIGHTS

1. In its final, delivered form each product of this project is

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expected to be of publishable quality. The Department reserves the right to reproduce or re-issue these materials in any quantity it determines is needed for non-commercial dissemination, including, at the Department's option, sales through the Government Printing Office.

2. The Department will be prepared to negotiate with the contractor other publication and dissemination arrangements which are advantageous to the USG and fair to the contractor, authors, and proposed publisher(s). These negotiations may include arrangements, if any, for publication of Books of Readings for some or all of the countries.

3. Any proposer, who has reason to believe arrangements can be made with a publisher which will produce income for the contractor that can be used to offset part of the cost of this project to the USG is invited to include details in the proposal.

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Approved For Release 2005/03/30 : CIA-RDP83M00171R000300080002-5

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